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A STUDY ON COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract

There are various approaches and methods that take the same paradigm but in different directions in developing communication ability. Even though these approaches aim to develop communicative competence of the learners, Communicative language teaching (CLT) is considered as an effective method of teaching communication. The unique characteristic features of CLT practices in classroom scenario helps the students not only in developing the communication skills in academic and professional situation but it also reflects more on the real- life situation by linking all the four language skills. So, this paper aims to review the definitions of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) defined by several researchers. It also examines the characteristic features, applications, activities and outcomes of CLT and analyses the competencies and various skills developed through CLT.

Keywords: communication, language, competence, skills

Introduction:

Second language acquisition (SLA) is one of the most researched fields that have resulted in formulation of various theories and frame works. These provide empirical impetus for examining the acquisition process and understanding of various aspects of acquisition process: the function of input and output characteristics, the influence of frequency of using native language and instruction methods and approaches implemented in classrooms. All these phenomena can be explained by adopting various methods depending upon the characteristic features of the theories. Earlier language teaching was based upon many theories and methods like grammar translation, audio-lingual, structuralism, behaviourism, constructivism, cognitivism etc. which focus mainly on the linguistic structure and grammatical rules, but in the new era the learners are expected to explore and explicate

their sociolinguistic, discourse, strategic, grammatical, organizational, pragmatic competence and gain communication skills. Therefore, communicative language teaching can be adopted in the curriculum which can enrich communication skills and various competencies of the learners. Dos Santos, L. M. (2020) states that "The CLT approach allows both teachers and students to transfer their traditional teaching and learning beliefs into an innovative teaching and learning approach and it increases the overall teaching experience of the teachers and learning interests of students". Therefore, this article reviews the definitions of communicative language teaching, the characteristic features of communicative language teaching, the activities and applications through which it can be implemented and the skills developed through CLT.

Objectives of the study:

1. To review the definition of the communicative language teaching.
2. To explain the characteristic feature of the communicative language teaching.
3. To appraise the application, activities and outcomes of communicative language teaching.
4. To analyse the skills that are developed through CLT.

Communicative Language Teaching:

Communicative language teaching (CLT) which emerged in the late 1970's and 80's emphasizes on communicative competence. Earlier theories focused more on teaching linguistic structures which developed writing skills but less importance was given to communication skills. In order to make students communicate effectively in real-life situations and context, communicative language teaching is adopted as a substantial eclectic and theoretical base. According to Desai, A. A. (2015) "CLT is an approach to teach foreign or second language which emphasizes on communicative competence. It also emphasizes on interaction as a means to teach language." Communicative competence is gained by the learners by communicating with each other and actively participating in the activities conducted in the classroom. In order to achieve this, change in the scenario of teaching learning process in the classroom is required. Teachers should be facilitators and students should become active participants rather than passive participants. Guato Guamán, N. M. (2022) concluded that, "a teacher-directed learner-centered class scenario is advocated in CLT where learners' role is to construct meaning and interact with others in authentic contexts". Since communicative language teaching mainly focuses on the learners, the teachers play the role of a coordinator and this transformation is required for enhancing the communication competencies of the students. CLT Classrooms use both eclectic knowledge and linguistic proficiency, linking classrooms and the world outside by creating life-like situations. Therefore, it can be stated that

participating in classroom activities will result in learning a language and gaining language competence. Consequently, learners are motivated and it result in acquisition of target language. Another undeniable strength of CLT is that it enhances and enriches learners' eclectic knowledge and linguistic proficiency regardless of their language levels.

Principles, Characteristic features and the goals of Communicative Language Teaching:

Various researchers have formulated principles, characteristic features, and the goals of communicative language teaching. These enact as a pivotal role for researchers and facilitators to explore and implement Communicative Language teaching. According to Richards, J. C. (2005) "Communicative language teaching can be understood as a set of principles about the goals of language teaching, how learners learn a language, the kinds of classroom activities that best facilitate learning, the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom". Bran (2007) enunciates that the goal of the communicative language teaching is to "make use of real-life situations that necessitate communication".

Desai, A. A. (2015) ascertains that the following are the principles of Communicative language teaching:

1. Make the learners understand the intention and expression of the writer and speaker and the prime importance is given to meaning.
2. Communication features are more important than linguistic forms.
3. Target language is used as a vehicle for classroom learning.
4. Appropriate use of language is considered more than accuracy.
5. All four skills should be integrated in teaching language.
6. It should be through social interaction which enhances cooperative learning.

Applications, Activities and Outcomes of Communicative language teaching:

Proper implementation and application of the theory and its procedures result in realizing the objectives and outcome of the teaching learning process. It also aids to form an appropriate teaching learning process both for the facilitator and the learner. Irmawati, N. D. (2012) delineates that "CLT is a second and foreign language teaching approach that aims on developing communicative competence of the students by using language for "meaningful purposes in authentic situation" and explains the application of communicative approach in six dimensions as: (1) Purpose of study, (2) syllabus model, (3) The Form and Procedure of learning activities, (4) The Kind and Function of learning materials, (5) Learner's role, and (6) students' role in teaching-learning process."

The aim of communicative language teaching is to enable students to relate language to everyday life scenario. In order to expose the learner's to real life situations, activities can be conducted by the facilitators. This will result in improving the communication skills of the learners and allow them to express themselves in real and meaningful situation. Desai, A. A. (2015) states that drama, role play and games are the activities used in communicative language teaching. According to Rambe, S. (2017). "Fluency versus accuracy activities, mechanical, meaningful and communicative practice, information gap activities, jigsaw activities, task completion activities, information gathering activities, opinion sharing, information transfer activities, reasoning- gap activities, role plays are the techniques used in CBLT". Hien.L.T.N (2021) emphasises that CLT can be used for teaching and learning any skills, not just speaking, so that teachers can design CLT activities "such as puzzles, games, interview, survey, map reading, giving instruction or direction, discussion to give a final decision, spotting the differences, etc." Maryslessor, A. O., Barasa, P. L., & Omulando.C. (2014) suggest "read aloud, questioning, narrating, role play, dictation, demonstration, simulation, minimal pair drills, group discussions and oral presentation as activities for improving communicative competence."

Competencies and Skills developed through CLT Learning:

Several researchers have explored CLT and used the method to improve various skills and competencies.

Developing Competencies:

Communicative language teaching theory focuses on all aspects of communication ability, rather than just grammatical or verbal skills. Al-Khamisi, K. M., & Sinha, Y. K. (2022) describes the way the focus of CLT has been on language functions with a significant emphasis on communicative interaction in the classroom, meaningful activity of language functions with learners, and active involvement of facilitators which, in turn, brings about a renewed emphasis on the ideas of positive reinforcement, consideration of mistakes as natural, and use of target language in the classroom which has emboldened the learners with more confidence.

Berezenko, V., Cherkhava, O., & Musiienko, Y. (2022) The communicative language teaching has been suggested to be more effective in teaching grammar compared to the conventional teaching method, and it additionally assists students in acquiring the language and enhancing their linguistic proficiency. Kurniawan, A. B. (2022) vocalizes that there are certain potential benefits in implementing communicative language teaching, or CLT. The main finding from the study is that communicative competence should be the goal of any language education course.

According to Mangaleswaran, S., & Aziz, A. A. (2019) communicative language teaching helps to develop language competencies like grammar skills, vocabulary skills, lexical reference, pragmatic competence and fluency rate. Teaching English as a foreign/second language has benefited greatly from the use of CLT. Communicative teaching focuses on "task-oriented, student-centered" language training, and it equips students with a broad understanding of the English language in order to communicate during the appropriate opportunities and situations.

Along the same line, Obenza, B., & Mendoza, R. (2021) through the quasi-experimental study with

second year students of a Higher education institution in Philippines investigated the effectiveness of communicative language learning activities. Pre-test and post-test were conducted and analyzed finally with t-test. The communicative Competence level of the experimental group is higher when compared to the Communicative Competence level of the control group. Furthermore, communicative language learning employed in language instruction develops the socio-linguistic competence, grammatical competence, discourse competence and the students' communicative competence.

Improving LSRW Skills:

The main focus of communicative language teaching is that, it ameliorates all four skills-listening, speaking, reading and writing and also one skill in particular. Sreehari, P. (2021). affirms that teaching and learning through communicative language teaching develops all the four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. The effective application of the procedures and conduct of appropriate activities have a significant effect on learners by improving their confidence level. It also enables the learners to express their own ideas and speak out courageously in the real-life situation. The learners are given more time to expose themselves in the learning process which helps them to organise their ideas systematically to communicate. CLT practises are more meaningful in classroom since it results in developing the communicative competence effectively.

Listening skills

Involvement, conscious attention, interest etc. are the essential requirements for improving listening skills and these requirements are fulfilled through multifarious methods and approaches by the teachers and facilitators. Communicative language teaching is considered as one among the effective method of teaching listening skills. It has been affirmed by Ma, T. (2009) observed that experimental group showed a remarkable change in improving listening skills when compared to control group. The P-value obtained from the ANOVA test is .001 which indicates CLT is an effective method. The students get an opportunity to improve the listening

ability which foster them in expressing their views and communicate efficiently.

Speaking skills

CLT approach develops the communicative competences of students which helps to communicate effectively. Nasution, D. F. (2022). have used the CIPP model (Context, Input, Process and Product) to conduct an evaluative study to see how far the principles of Communicative Language Teaching approach is implemented by lecturers in the form of learning activities in a Speaking course and students responses regarding activities. The data was collected through questionnaire and interview and it indicated that lecturers use the Communicative Language Teaching method and conduct various activities. Students revealed that CLT motivates them in improving their speaking skills. Saputra, J. B. (2015) have used Classroom Action Research with Kemmis and Taggart model to solve the problem of speaking English of the student's in Central Lampaung. The results revealed that Communicative language teaching method has an effective impact on the improvement of students speaking. Silva-Valencia, J. C., Villacís-Villacís, W., & Hidalgo-Camacho, C. (2001) conducted 20 communicative activities using communicative language teaching method to develop speaking skills of the students. A survey was conducted to analyze the students engagement and students effective oral production and the results show a positive impact on improving speaking skills of the students.

Reading skills

Recognizing enumerations, signal words and the contextual clues for vocabulary, the organization of a text, evaluating the text, and the role of background knowledge, scanning to locate specifically required information, understanding information not explicitly stated and transcoding information to diagrammatic display are the important reading skills that are developed through CLT.

Lai, H. K. (2021) through four procedures: Pre-test and Post-test, Classroom Observation, Questionnaire and structured interview, have investigated the contribution of CLT towards the

development of ESL learners' reading skills. Significant improvement has been shown by the experimental group; they were motivated to communicate with each other which helped them to learn more vocabulary. It has also improved reading practices of students in classroom. Setiyorini, T. J., Yulia, Y., & Robiasih, H. (2022) has used CLT method to teach reading among the university students since they need to improve macro-skills and micro-skills of reading. Case study method was used and through close-ended questionnaires and open-ended interviews the data was analysed and the findings showed a significant improvement on micro and macro skills of reading.

Writing skills

Communicative language teaching aids to develop elemental grammatical structure, sufficient and appropriate vocabulary, structured sentences, flow of thought, coherence of ideas etc. It also enriches the usage of functional writing skill for real-life situation. Tarigan, F. N. (2014) conducted an experimental research to prove the effect of CLT in developing writing hortatory among students. The test was conducted with the experimental group and control group and the findings reveal that the group taught through communicative language teaching scored higher when compared to the control group. Samiullah, M., Ahmad, A., & Din, M. N. U. (2018) aimed to observe the effect of CLT approach on functional writing among the students. Quasi experimental design was adopted to reveal the effect. A rubric was used to examine the result and it is concluded that the communicative language teaching approach is strongly recommended for writing English.

Though the researchers have used different methodologies and analysed the results with different tests and rubrics the conclusion of the study and research is that the effect of using Communicative language teaching excels in all aspects.

Conclusion: The main objective of teaching a language is to make learners to communicate fluently, independently and confidently. To achieve this objective CLT can be effectively adopted, since significant features of CLT is a learner centered

approach that emphasizes on participation of the learners. CLT approach motivates the students' engagement and participation in classroom activities, highlights on the use of language in real life situation and develops linguistic competence and various skills as well.

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